

SAN JOSE, CA – Today, Rep. Honda joined millions of Americans in celebrating Cinco de Mayo. This day marks the historic triumph of the Mexican people over the invading French Army in the 1862 battle of Puebla.

“Today, we celebrate the importance of Latinos in this country, specifically the contributions Mexican Americans have made and continue to make and how their achievements strengthen our nation,” said Rep. Honda. “This date is of special significance because it reminds us that all peoples -- regardless of background -- need freedom, liberty and self-determination, and that all cultures are worthy of respect. For Mexico, Cinco de Mayo has become a symbol of unity and patriotism in its history. In the United States, it is also a celebration of the rich cultural heritage Mexican Americans have brought with them.”

Latinos are amongst the fastest-growing people of color populations in the United States, noted Rep. Honda. They are leading a record number of small businesses -- 1.6 million, with annual revenues of more than \$200 billion. The fastest-growing small business sector is Latina-owned firms. Today, there are 29 Hispanic Members in the United States Congress, including 22 Democrats. Many of them are Mexican-Americans, representing constituencies from all around the country.

Rep. Honda also noted that Democrats have taken bold steps to ensure that this community has every opportunity to reach the American dream. The Democratic Hispanic Agenda - *Compromiso Demócrata con el Pueblo Latino* - embodies an historic commitment to the issues that Latino families care about, such as education, jobs and meeting the commitment to our nation's veterans. Democrats are also working for measures to streamline and reform the immigration process and improve minority health.

“For Democrats, diversity is not just a slogan, it is a bedrock principal,” added Rep. Honda. “Latinos share with all Americans the common goals of freedom, opportunity, and a chance to build a better life. Today, we say ‘gracias’ for contributing to the strength of the American economy and to the vibrancy of our national culture. ‘Gracias’ for helping to improve our society.”